

A

# REVIEW

## OF THE

# STATE

## OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Thursday, July 10. 1707.

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**I** Now come to my old friend again that sent me the Letter, in which his next Enquiry is, what is my Opinion of the Battle of *Almanza*, and what Part has the Earl of *Galloway* acted there? — I understand that Question, to mean if he has acted wisely or soldierly, or not? for 'tis very much the Custom of this Age, and in *England* especially, that whenever a Disaster happens, the Actors are rumag'd for Mis-carriage.

Now I shall not be backward to answer this Gentleman very directly to his Question, *what do I think of the Battle of Almanza?* — What do I think! why I think, Sir, as every Body must think — *I think we were beaten* — entirely defeated, routed, overthrown, or whatever a *Jacobite*, a *French-man*, or what you please, can desire — And why should *England* be ashamed to own a Defeat? 'tis for

*France*, who is oblig'd to keep up the Hearts of his People by Artifice, Trick, Sham, Or diminishing Losses, heightning petty Advantages, and blinding his Subjects Eyes; 'tis, I say, for *France* to conceal things, give wrong Accounts, and amuse the World, to keep up the Spirits of a discourag'd Nation.

Our Affairs, Blessed be GOD, are under no such Necessity; 'tis no Dishonour to an Army to be beaten — Nor would I have *English-men* conceal their Losses, as if they were afraid to let the World know they had the worst — *We were beaten*, well, what then, Gentlemen *High-Flyers*, Gentlemen *Jacobites*? You that rejoice at the Overthrow of your own Country; you that on the roth of *June* drank the D. of *Berwick's* Health, and wish'd more *British* Regiments cut to pieces by him and his *French* Papists; you that went in the Dark to the *Market-Cross* of



of a certain united City, and there were not asham'd to huzzar for K. James VIII.—Of whom and your merry Meeting we may say something hereafter—*Well, we were beaten*, the Chance of War turn'd against us—And what now—What have you to say to it? —

*First of all, Dyed Abner as a Fool dy'd. Did the Troops dye like English-men*, did they fight it out, did they sell the *French* a dear Victory, or did they run away like Poltrons? Did they fly like the *French* Infantry at *Ramellies*, that hardly ever engag'd—Was there ever a Regiment of *English* Guards there, of 3 Battalions, who, like the Regiment *Du Roy* at *Ramellies*, surrendered their Arms, and begg'd Quarter of one Regiment of *Scots* Dragoons? Was there any Officer or Soldier that did not do his Duty, and tho' engag'd against almost two to one, had not the *Portuguese* quitted the Field, or had there been no *Portuguese* there, in all Probability you had heard another Story, and a better Account of that Battle had been given? Nay, the very thing you boast of, viz. That all the Infantry was either kill'd or taken, is a plain Demonstration of the thing I am upon, that they fought like *English-men*, that is to say, to the last Gasps; and this may instruct the Enemy, that if they will do any Good upon the *English*, it must always be with Numbers, and they must always fight two to one; let any Man tell us in the *French* Army, where were our Colonels kill'd but at the Head of their Regiments, even our scatter'd Foot were rally'd on the Plain, where they were routed, and the poor Remnant that were got together tho' often charg'd in their Retreat, sav'd themselves for a Capitulation. It can be no Dishonour to be thus beaten; the bravest Man in the World may be beaten, and the best Army may be overpowered.

*Secondly, Are we beaten so*, as not to show our Faces again? Do the Gentlemen in *Spain* expect to see us there no more? Are there no more *Britains* left to take up their Quarrel? No, no, Gentlemen, the *French* themselves are not of that Mind, they know us better than so, and therefore I expect, they will make the best of their Time to make K. Charles abandon *Spain*, if it be possi-

ble, before the Relief we shall send him can arrive; but let not our Friends the *Jacobites* flatter themselves with such weak Expectations—But if they will effect their Work nicely, if they will do it like Workmen, let them fit out their Fleet now with their usual Expedition, come out of their Harbours, and beat the Confederate Fleet too, that the Succours to be sent may not reach them, then they do their Business, this would finish the Defeat of King Charles, and effectually drive him out of *Spain*; but this they will not do in haste neither.

Now let us come to the ill Conduct that is enquir'd after; and *First*, how did my Lord Galloway behave? to this I answer, *In the Field* gallantly, as he ever did, and with the same Prudence as well as Bravery, which made the old Duke *Schomberg* say, he was the best Officer the King of *France* had, as to his Conduct as a General; let the Posting the Brigade of Foot in each Wing of Horse testify for him, a Method first practis'd by that true Original of the Art of War, *Gustavus Adolphus*, King of *Sweden*, and a Method, which as it sav'd the left Wing in this Fight, so had the *Portuguese* stood their Ground, had certainly sav'd the right, and perhaps had gain'd the Battle—This intermingling Foot among the Horse was the thing that gain'd the great Battle at *Lutzen* in *Germany*, where that brave King was kill'd in the Head of his victorious Army. It was the saving of the *Sweish* Horse at the Battle of *Nordlingen*, and has hardly ever been practis'd without Success. As to the personal Gallantry of my Lord Galloway, if it needed any Testimony, I believe, his Enemies would supply it; but in the mean time, let two Cuts in his Face be his Witnesses; the *Romans* counted a Wound in the Face the greatest Trophy of Honour in the World, and any Wound behind was equally dishonourable—What could the E. of Galloway, had he been a private Trooper, have acquir'd more Honour in, than that having but one hand to fight with, he came up to the Teeth of the Enemy, and brought away the Proof of it in his Face.

But if as a General, his Lordship expos'd himself so as to be cut in the Face, it is very plain, it was close Work, and well follow'd.

—Let



Let no Man therefore take up any Reproach on a Gentleman, whose Conduct, the whole fighting Part of Europe knows is unexceptionable, and pretend to blame him for not obtaining the Victory.

Another Sort of People blame the thing in general, and cry out, as I have said in other Cases, it was not their Business to fight, and here I think he is justified: for if, as appears by the publick Account printed by Authority, the French would have cut off their Retreat, and that their Magazines were exhausted, they were then under a Necessity to fight; and in all such Cases of Necessity it has been the Practice of the greatest Generals in the World to fight while their Men were in Heart, and their Courage as well as Bodies fresh, rather than to stay till straitened for Provisions, they faint, and by retreating lose their Spirit.

Thus Prince Lewis of Baden fought the great Battle at Salenkement in Hungary, when his Provisions were cut off, and tho' not one to three he attack'd the Enemy first.

The old King of Sweden, *Gustavus Adolphus*, whom I often quote on these Accounts, and of whose Actions I have some particular Manuscripts by me, us'd to say, that there was always one in five odds, in leading an Army on to attack their Enemies, and waiting till they were attack'd by them; the one look'd like an Assurance of Victory, and the other had a Distrust or Fear of being beaten in the very Countenance of the Action; and I believe in general Observation, it would be found true, that 'tis not one time in five but the Army that attacks, has the Victory, and most of the Actions of this Age have witnessed it; I remember but three that have miscarry'd, viz. *K. William* at *Steenkirk*, the French and the *D. of Savoy* attacking Prince Eugene at *Chiari*, and the French attacking *P. Lewis* in the Lines at *Stoikoffen*. But at the Abbey of *St. Denis* at *Mons*, at *Mons Castle*, at *Flern*, at *Landen*, at *Skellembergb*, at *Blenheim*, at *Turin*, at *Narva*, the late Action in *Saxony* between the Swedes and Saxons, and since between King *Augustus* and the Swedes, and innumerable Instances are to be given, where the Assaultants always prevail.

If then the E. of Galloway saw a Necessity

to fight, it was his Business to be the Assaultant, and to take the Advantage of the Spirit and Vigor of his Soldiers, who in those hot Countries seldom are so healthy as in other Places.

And I cannot but here complain of it, as a Misfortune to Britain, not that we are oblig'd to fight in that Country, but that our Men have a particular Faculty not to have the least Regard to their Health, or in the least to govern themselves there, where the Fruits of the Earth, the Grapes especially, are as fatal, as they are tempting to them; and this makes our Men sink in their Numbers more there than in any other Place—

How else think you should it be, that the whole English and Dutch Forces, which the E. of Galloway could draw together, tho' after the Army, which went with the E. of Rivers was join'd, did not exceed 10000 Men, after so many Succours and Additions as have been sent thither?

I wish, this were rightly represented to our Governors, whom it may concern, as it has but one Remedy, viz. to send none but old Regiments to Spain; the old beaten Fellows, that have seen a Campaign or two, and are harden'd to the Field, are more wary of themselves, they know what it is to be sick, and have seen the raw young Fellows dye in Ditches for Want of Care, and these will hold it; but if you will always send new rais'd Regiments to Spain, you must allow one third at least to dye by the Flux, and by Surfeits, and send in Proportion, which is a heartless Work, and has two Evils besides the Loss of the Men.

1. 'Tis excessive chargeable to the Publick to send larger Recruits, and oftner than in the other Case they need to do, and raising, equipping and furnishing new Armies.

2. 'Tis a Discouragement to a General, when he knows things are expected of him by the World, suitable to the Forces he has under him, while the best Part of his Army is oblig'd to encamp in the Hospitals instead of the Field, and the Lives are shortened by the Distempers of the Country, not by the Hands of the Enemy.

All these things however serve to defend the Conduct of our General, and of all his Officers; and I know nothing can reflect upon



upon their Wisdom, in all the Relations I have seen of this Matter, but this, viz. That they should expect any such thing, as fighting from the Portuguese, and have the least Dependance upon them; of whom, if I should say I ever heard they did any thing in the fair Field but run away, I should belye their Character and my own Memory.

Indeed, I know no greater Misfortuné to a Man of Honour, that dare show his Face in the Field, than to be oblig'd to depend upon Troops, that cannot do their Duty; 'tis a cheerful Office for a Commander to lead on Troops of brave, hearty, bold Fellows, that will follow him into the Fire, and stand close to the last Drop: But to see the left Wing advance, and push the Enemies Horse into mere Crowds; to see the Infantry break the Lines of their Enemies, and bear down all before them, and then to see the right Wing run away at the first Shock, and the victorious Enemy fall on the Flank of the rest, and wring the Victory out of their Hands by mere Number, and the plain Mischief of Cowardice; this is very hard and mortifying.

In our future Management therefore of this War, when I see the Lists of K. Charles's Army, I must reckon the Portuguese for just no Body, they may be put into Garrisons, and planted to secure the Countries, and help the other Regiments to go into the Field; but I hope, our Generals will have a Care, how they give them the Front of the Battle again.

I know there are some, who exclaim against King Charles as instrumental to this Loss, by detaining Troops with him; but of this I shall say more, when I see farther into the Particulars; there may be Difference of Opinions and Judgment as to the War, and King Charles having the French from Rousillon at his Back, might not be willing to be left too naked—But no Man can imagine, K. Charles desir'd the English Army should be expos'd—And particularly it seem'd otherwise, by his ordering them to divide and act defensively; but of this hereafter.

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